



**York Bus Forum – York Environment Forum – York Civic Trust**

# **YORK STATION FRONT: OBJECTIVES and PRINCIPLES**

**25 Oct 2019**

## **1 Introduction**

This document has been prepared by York Bus Forum in conjunction with York Civic Trust and York Environment Forum Transport Group, following a meeting with members and officers of the Council on 27<sup>th</sup> September. As agreed, it sets out the policy objectives which we suggest the Council should aim to achieve, the strategy which it might adopt generally and specifically for public transport and, based on these, the principles which the redevelopment of York Station Front should aim to achieve.

The contents of this document relate not just to the immediate Station Front scheme, but to the longer-term outcome we believe should be aimed at, with the Station Front development being the first step towards something more ambitious, more like the 'bus station' that the York public widely believe is needed.

Since 1839 York Railway Station has increasingly become the key transport hub for the city. The demolition of Queen Street Bridge gives a rare opportunity to turn this area into the primary interchange for travellers from outside and within the city. By connecting rail, bus, pedestrian and cycle traffic in one integrated location we can help achieve many of the City of York Council's policy aims.

## **2 Objectives**

York Civic Trust published its statement of *Principles of Transport Policy for the City of York* (May 2019). That paper sets out the Trust's vision for York as a city which respects its environment while enhancing quality of life, social justice and economic vitality. On that basis it proposes that the Council's forthcoming new Local Transport Plan should adopt the following objectives:-

- 2.1 improved accessibility for all (and hence equality of opportunity);
- 2.2 enhanced air quality;
- 2.3 decarbonisation;

- 2.4 greater efficiency and reliability of the transport system;
- 2.5 an improved public realm; and
- 2.6 improved safety and enhanced public health.

We endorse those objectives as a starting point for considering the design principles for the redevelopment of York Station Front.

### **3 Strategy**

In its statement of principles, York Civic Trust proposes that, since population growth is likely to exacerbate York's transport problems, the Council's strategy should focus on reducing car use and the underlying need to travel. It argues that improvements to public transport, walking and cycling, freight and the use of the road network will be important in complementing these elements of the strategy.

#### **3.1 Users' Priority Hierarchy**

The statement of principles strongly endorses the hierarchy of users within the current Local Transport Plan, and considers it essential that this hierarchy is applied consistently to all aspects of transport policy. We agree with this, and have structured our proposed principles below in terms of that hierarchy:-

- a) (highest priority) pedestrians with mobility problems;
- b) pedestrians;
- c) people with mobility problems;
- d) cyclists;
- e) public transport users (including bus, rail, coach, water, and taxi);
- f) powered two-wheelers;
- g) commercial and business users (including deliveries and HGVs);
- h) car-borne shoppers and visitors; and
- i) (lowest priority) car-borne commuters.

#### **3.2 Specific Enhancements**

More specifically, we suggest that public transport enhancements within this strategy should aim to:-

- 3.2.1 provide effective and attractive alternatives to the car in corridors where car use is currently high;
- 3.2.2 overcome gaps in the spatial and temporal distribution of bus services;
- 3.2.3 develop effective interchanges between services as one means of extending service coverage;
- 3.2.4 take steps to tackle congestion where it imposes delays or unreliability on bus services;
- 3.2.5 enhance the quality of the bus services offered; and
- 3.2.6 ensure that bus use is affordable for all sectors of society.

## **4 Design Principles**

As noted above, we have specified our proposed Design Principles as contributing to the Objectives and Strategy outlined above, and have structured them in terms of the hierarchy of users adopted by the Council.

### **4.1 Pedestrians**

- 4.1.1 Pedestrians should be provided with direct routes to the station and interchange from all directions, including the route across Scarborough Bridge, the new approach through the Hudson Quarter and the planned developments around the western 'rear' station entrance.
- 4.1.2 Pedestrians should be provided with priority crossings of Queen Street and Station Road at locations which are, where possible, on these direct routes.
- 4.1.3 All other vehicular crossings of pedestrian routes should be designed to minimise conflict and to give priority to pedestrians; walking routes should not share space with those for cyclists.
- 4.1.4 Since all interchange will be on foot, walking routes between bus services and between bus and rail should be as short as possible and, where possible, under cover.
- 4.1.5 All these routes should be designed to meet the requirements of those with mobility handicaps.
- 4.1.6 Signing of all of these routes needs to be clear and consistent.

### **4.2 Cyclists**

- 4.2.1 Cyclists should be provided with direct routes to the station and interchange from all directions, including the route across Scarborough Bridge, the new approach through the Hudson Quarter and the planned developments around the western 'rear' station entrance.
- 4.2.2 Cyclists should be provided with priority crossings of Queen Street and Station Road at locations which are, where possible, on these direct routes.
- 4.2.3 Through routes for cyclists between Lowther Terrace, Blossom Street, Lendal Bridge and Scarborough Bridge should be protected and where possible enhanced.
- 4.2.4 No cycle route should share space with those for general traffic or pedestrians, and all vehicular crossings of cycle routes should be designed to minimise conflict and to give priority to cyclists.
- 4.2.5 Crossings of cycle routes and pedestrian routes should be minimised, especially where traffic density is likely to be higher, and priority between cycles and pedestrians clearly signed.
- 4.2.6 Cycle parking at the station should be retained, and if possible increased, at locations which are convenient for cyclists.

## 4.3 Bus Services

- 4.3.1 All park and ride services should be routed via the station (with the #2 and #59 eventually serving it via the new hub at the western 'rear' station entrance), and operating hours should be extended to provide an effective alternative to car-based access from outside York.
- 4.3.2 Where possible, all other city centre bus services should be routed to serve the station, thus ensuring that it provides an effective interchange for all public transport.
- 4.3.3 Even with no increase in service frequencies, we anticipate that this will involve 39 buses per hour in each direction passing through the interchange at the station front, 14 buses per hour passing through the new hub at the western station entrance, and a further 35 buses per hour turning at the station.
- 4.3.4 In the shorter term the number of bus stops provided needs to be sufficient to allow for these flows of buses, while taking account of the impact of variability in arrival rates. Further work is needed to assess the number of stops required.
- 4.3.5 For the longer term the expected increase in bus traffic needs to be assessed, and the primary bus interchange be designed to allow for at least this much expansion without undue cost and disruption.
- 4.3.6 The turning and layover facilities need to be sufficient to provide for the 35 buses per hour turning, and designed to avoid delays to buses while turning (avoiding conflict with vehicles entering and leaving the main station car park as far as possible).
- 4.3.7 Provision for sightseeing, race day and rail replacement buses should be separate from these regular service requirements.
- 4.3.8 All bus stops and, where possible, the links between them should be under cover.
- 4.3.9 Given the complexity of the resulting service pattern, a central information point with real time information and appropriate seating should be provided, together with clear signing to all stops and real time information at all stops.
- 4.3.10 Given the potential need to interchange between services in Station Front and in the new hub at the western station entrance, consideration needs to be given to a direct under-cover route between the two.

## 4.4 Taxis

- 4.4.1 The taxi rank should be as close to the station entrance as possible, without disrupting provision for pedestrians, cyclists and buses.
- 4.4.2 The taxi queue should be located where it does not disrupt pedestrians, cyclists, or buses, but so that drivers can readily see (preferably directly but possibly via a display screen) when spaces in the rank become available.
- 4.4.3 Taxis with passengers should be able to enter and leave the station without undue delay.
- 4.4.4 Consideration needs to be given to providing a second taxi rank at the western station entrance and to providing appropriate signing for rail passengers to know which rank to use.

## **4.5 Servicing**

- 4.5.1 Where servicing is required for frontage premises, it should be limited to times when it causes least disruption to other users.
- 4.5.2 Service bays and access points should be provided in locations where they do not disrupt or cause hazards for pedestrians, cyclists, or buses.

## **4.6 Car Users**

- 4.6.1 Drop-off points should be provided as close to the station entrance as possible, without disrupting or causing hazards for pedestrians, cyclists, or buses, and should be designed to ensure that appropriate use can be effectively enforced.
- 4.6.2 If possible, the drop-off facilities should be designed to allow drivers to return in the same direction they came from.
- 4.6.3 Short stay parking, particularly for those collecting passengers, should be located closer to the station entrance than long stay parking.
- 4.6.4 High levels of long stay parking are incompatible with the strategy outlined above. An analysis is needed of the potential to replace it by more intensive and extended use of Park and Ride and local bus services.
- 4.6.5 If a reduction in long stay parking provision has financial implications for the rail industry, consideration should be given to enabling operators to share in the revenues generated by an expanded Park and Ride service.

## **4.7 Cost and Deliverability**

The design principles outlined above should, we argue, be applied throughout the design process. We are well aware that the budget and timescale for Phase 1 of the Station Front development are limited. However, we would like to ensure that Phase 1 will be designed with all of the above principles in mind, so that they can be applied in full at a later stage without incurring abortive costs.

We recognise that the bus interchange York has long needed cannot be fully delivered by the present Station Front scheme, and that further funding will be needed for a Phase 2 scheme. We strongly urge the Council to seek that funding, and to ensure that it enables our principles above to be applied in full.

We are aware that there are differences of view between Network Rail and LNER on the one side and CYC and York Central Partnership on the other as to the need to provide so much parking at the station. A reduction in parking provision at the Station Front should offer a means of diverting funding to enable our principles to be satisfied more fully. We recommend that the need for parking, and the potential of alternatives based on Park and Ride, should be analysed as a matter of urgency, and we are willing to contribute to such a review.

The long-term objective, for Phase 3, should be a much larger bus interchange with more capacity than would be needed in Phase 2, so there is no pressing need for the Station Front scheme to deliver everything immediately, providing it leaves open a route to this longer-term objective, in a way that avoids undue cost and disruption when the time for expansion does come.